

**SPM: Results Still Following Trend - Muhyiddin
Bernama
Mar 3, 2015**

KUALA LUMPUR, March 3 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said although the overall performance in last's year's Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination dipped slightly, it was still following the trend and was not very much different than in the three years before 2013.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, said the performance could be deemed satisfactory because the candidates were able to use Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) well despite the percentage of questions requiring this increasing.

"This method of questioning could have been among the factors affecting the performance of candidates. Apart from this, several other factors that might have contributed to the swings in performance will be analysed in detail.

"However, the results also showed that the performance gap between urban and rural candidates has narrowed as compared to 2013," he said in a statement in Kuala Lumpur, Tuesday.

The results were also announced earlier Tuesday. Of the 455,839 candidates who took the examination, 11,289 or 2.62 per cent obtained excellent results.

Muhyiddin in congratulating candidates who achieved excellent results said the results analysis announced showed the academic achievements of students who had undergone secondary education and sat for the examination at certificate level.

"Hopefully, they will continue the culture of excellence in their lives and fields they excel in. To all candidates who did not do well, take it as a challenge and opportunity to achieve success in future," he said.

The deputy prime minister also congratulated all special need candidates for recording comendable improvements.

According to him, their success showed all candidates had the opportunity to perform well in the SPM examination if they worked hard.

Muhyiddin said the ministry had explored the latest pedagogical approach to raise the quality of teaching and and learning in the classroom.

"Among them is student thinking skills as well as various learning programmes and the implementation of standard-based curriculum.

"HOTS is a skill required to be mastered by students as preparation to be global citizens. Among HOTS skills required by students are mathematical reasoning, language

interpretation, making inferences, scientific reasoning and problem solving skills which were measured in the 2014 SPM examination," he said.

He clarified that apart from these, the ministry was also actively working to strengthen support for school teachers and administrators.

This included introducing full-time guidance teachers and guidance principals or headmasters at district education office level (PPD).

"They would be able to give complete focus as mentors and strengthen relations between teachers and principals or headmasters.

"Competent leaders are a factor which contributed to the performance of students and as such the ministry will seek measures to enhance the quality of leadership at JPN and PPD," he said.

Muhyiddin said the ministry was determined to raise the quality of students' achievement in line with the aspiration to place Malaysia's education system within the top one third in the world and it was starting with the quality of public examinations in the country.

He said the ministry would continue to implement various suitable intervention programmes to raise the excellent performance of students in various aspects including the SPM examination.

"This is important to meet the six student aspirations under the 2013-2025 Malaysia Education Blueprint and to produce holistic human capital as desired under the National Education Philosophy (FPK).

"Apart from that, the ministry will conduct studies to identify factors which influenced the performance and results of students so that suitable follow-up action could be taken," he said.

Muhyiddin said the ministry would ensure effective and meaningful programmes for student learning especially for subjects which recorded lower achievement to be implemented more thoroughly and with full responsibility.

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